

new life in Poland

IRVING BRANT

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POLAND

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STEPHEN TAYLOR, M.D., M.P.

On the New Poland

THE new Poland faces as tough a job of reconstruction as any European country. Happily it has certain assets. Its people, tempered by Nazi occupation, have nevertheless retained their resilience, dash and sense of humour. They have decided to make their new country a Socialist country. And they aspire to make it a Democracy.

With this initial success of Polish Socialism, no one will quarrel. The Polish economy is now a planned economy, industry is largely nationalised, public works are going ahead apace, and the social services are developing along sound Socialist lines. The theorist will regret the creation of peasant proprietors rather than collective farms as a solution to the Polish agrarian problem; but the practical politician will confess there was no alternative. Perhaps the development in the countryside of the Co-operative Movement, strong in Poland and not only for retail services, may avoid the evils of peasants' isolationism. At all events, Poland is fast developing into a Socialist country, and those of us who see no hope save in a Socialist world must be appropriately thankful.

The problem of Democracy is much less simple. As I see it, its essence is individual freedom—freedom to speak one's mind, to organise, to publish one's views, and finally, freedom to choose one's rulers and to change them if one so desires and can persuade an adequate number of people to agree with him.

But such individual freedom can only be enjoyed if there is general agreement on certain fundamentals—that it is wrong to destroy freedom, that whatever government is chosen should have both the power and the opportunity to show if it can do the job. In Britain, we have such agreement. It has come without bitter struggles in the past, and without enormous

self-restraint on the part of both victorious and defeated political parties. It is because Conservatives value democracy more than Capitalism that the British vision of democracy is possible.

In Poland, and indeed in many European countries, defeated parties do not accept the ballot box ; nor is there any guarantee that the victors will not manipulate it in due course to their own advantage. To expect British democratic methods to function under such circumstances is to expect the impossible. What Poland now has to learn is political toleration, inside its new-found Socialist structure.

I believe Poland will learn this lesson. In its hatred of racial discrimination, the Polish Government is setting an example to the Polish people. And in the existence of a number of political parties, even if some of them are of the extreme left, I see a great hope. For each must, in fact, develop its own philosophy if it is to retain an active membership. The Polish Socialist Party in particular, with its strong co-operative and trade union bias, can contribute something to a Polish workers' State which is of immense value.

... Tolerance, respect for the individual conscience, and humanity are virtues which Socialists everywhere must keep alive. Above all, we must hope to see all the Polish political parties develop an increasing respect for objectivity and truth. Truth as propaganda invariably wins in the long run—just because its truth is eventually obvious. The vehemence of Polish democracy has, I think, something of value to learn from British understatement.

... Socialist Poland and Socialist Britain must be good friends. We have much to learn from each other. And Socialist Poland can, I believe, act as a cultural and political bridge between Socialism in the West and Socialism in the East. Such a bridge will only be built if we understand the new Poland, and the new Poland in turn understands us. Mr. Brant's book is a real contribution to the first half of the job. It is friendly, yet objective, enthusiastic, yet fair. I wish it the success it deserves.

GEORGE THOMAS, M.P.

On the New Poland

I HAVE just returned from a tour of that troubled land and, consequently, find this book of fascinating interest. The author has succeeded in telling with restraint the amazing story of the plight and the pluck of the Polish people to-day.

Poland has endured, not merely material destruction unparalleled in history, but also six years of determined efforts to destroy the spirit of her people. It is, therefore, a glowing tribute to her resilience that Poland is to-day vigorously and enthusiastically setting about her task of reconstruction. Mr. Brant is certainly nearer understatement than overstatement when he described the urgent need for U.N.R.R.A. supplies.

The objective way in which the author deals with the internal politics of Poland will commend itself to every reader. It is never easy for a foreigner to interpret the feelings and convictions of a country, but Mr. Brant has succeeded in presenting a clear picture of a complex problem.

This book renders a signal service if only for the chapter on "A Nation Migrates." Every visitor to Poland must surely feel that transport presents a heartrending problem to that Government. Life in Poland is hard, and it is sheer faith and optimism which keeps the people going.

In Britain and America to-day, one of the greatest tragedies is the cloud of prejudice by ill-informed people whenever Eastern Europe is discussed. By this factual work, Mr. Brant should help in sweeping away many bogies. It is impossible to learn of the Polish struggle for existence in this post-war world without feeling that the great Democracies must accept their responsibilities for rendering major assistance to this proud but sorely tried people.

INTRODUCTION

BY IRVING BRANT

For six years Poland has been known for its suffering. The very name of the country has been a synonym for the devastation, poverty and unspeakable cruelties inflicted upon the people by Nazi Germany. There was suffering before that, and tyranny. Up to 1939, it was the tyranny of Polish militarists seeking to preserve the fading wealth and power of great landowners. It was the suffering of peasants with too little or no land, of underpaid workers, of racial and religious minorities subject to age-old hates and prejudices. Polish and Nazi tyrannies both have passed, but the old suffering has not. It has been submerged and dwarfed in the terrible reality and aftermath of the German occupation.

Poland, however, is more than a land of hungry people living in shattered homes. It is a country in which suffering has stimulated the people to hard thinking and intense efforts, not only for their individual welfare but as members of the community. Out of this, something is emerging which seems likely to set the pattern for Europe's smaller nations. It may do so for some of the greater powers of the world as well.

What Poland is seeking for itself, and thereby offering to the world, is an economic system which socializes big business and finance, thus destroying the power of concentrated private capital, but follows the system of private enterprise in small industries, trade and agriculture. It is establishing this economic system through a coalition government set up by a concert of political parties representing a large majority of the people, but without an election. In consequence there is no sure means of knowing what the verdict of the people will

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be when they are called on to elect friends or foes of the new system. Virtually all politicians in Poland publicly support this programme. That seems to indicate general approval of it by the people. But some political leaders are against it at heart, as shown by their proposals to combine government ownership with private operation. If the peasants, who make up a great majority of the people, should be won to this view, it would either put an end to the experiment or lead to revolutionary resistance by the workers. They are intensely devoted to socialized industry, either as a whole or in their own factories.

On January 2nd, 1946, Minister of Industry Hilary Minc reported two bills to the National Council, the 300-member legislative body of Poland. Both were adopted and became law. One of these bills decreed state ownership of all industrial enterprises employing more than fifty persons in a shift. Banks were nationalized also. Coupled with earlier state activities, this establishes a full system of government ownership of large industry, financial institutions, power plants, railways, airways and warehousing and trans-shipping facilities.

At the same time the National Council adopted a bill to promote private initiative in industry and commerce. Instead of leaving the status of small industries uncertain, the government guarantees permanent private ownership of all business now left in private hands, or privately started in the future. The guarantee covers establishment, operation and sale of all such private businesses, including those which come to employ more than fifty persons per shift through future expansion.

Minister Minc reported to the council that, based on pre-war figures, the new law would nationalize 2,700 concerns and leave 227,000 in private hands. Those nationalized employ forty per cent, and private concerns sixty per cent, of non-agricultural workers. With the peasant population included, the state industries will employ ten per cent of the entire working population. The key industries whose large units come into state ownership are coal, iron, steel, textile, cement and construction. Others which will be subject to rapid expan-

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sion by the state are the chemical, paper and food products industries, and textiles for export to Russia.

Many industries which are big business in the United States operate on a workshop basis in Poland. Clothing, shoes and underwear are produced mostly in small shops. Small drug and cosmetic laboratories are numerous. The retail and wholesale handling of goods remains in private hands or those of co-operative enterprises. Thus the new law allows a vast place for private business initiative, while totally destroying centralized capitalism.

Postwar conditions made it surprisingly easy to put this system of nationalization into physical effect. Germany had dispossessed old owners and built new factories. The German retreat left industry without owners or managers. Many factories were burned or shattered, but left with repairable machinery. The Polish Government took charge of these plants as an emergency measure, to get them into operation. Thus nearly every factory covered by the nationalization law was being operated by the state when the transfer to public ownership took place. At the same time, thousands of Poles who lost their property or their jobs during the war were opening little workshops. They have a small economic stake in private enterprise, and a larger emotional interest in it. The government guarantee of private ownership protects their future, while their need for cheap semi-processed materials makes them potential supporters of socialized big business.

Compensation will be paid to all former owners except enemy nationals or persons who went over to the enemy or voluntarily ceded their properties to them during the war. Owing to the vast extent of German control, payment will be required for only about 25 per cent of nationalized industry, most of that being foreign owned. Poland should pay indemnity, Minister Minc (a Communist) told the National Council, because "we are not accomplishing a Socialist revolution." This is different, he said, from the agrarian revolution, in which "we liquidated in 1945 a feudal landlordship which

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was liquidated in France at the end of the eighteenth century.” Furthermore, he said, the payment of “a just and right indemnity to foreign capitalists” would enable Poland “to enter into normal economic relations with the West.”

Minister Minc told the council that the industrial bills, “in conjunction with the agrarian reform, define the basic economic foundations of democratic Poland.” The agrarian reform, under present law, splits up great estates and puts them under peasant ownership. In calling this a part of the basic economic foundations of the country, Mr. Minc strikes a blow at those politicians who alarm Polish peasants by hinting that the government intends to follow the Russian example and nationalize the land. This fear had begun to fade last autumn. It should be further diminished by the large part given to private ownership in the industrial programme.

Americans make a grave error when they look upon Poland’s venture into semi-socialized economy as something inspired by Soviet Russia or dependent upon Russian support. It grows, rather, out of the belief that an overpopulated country of limited natural resources must make a more efficient use of what it has than is possible under the monopolistic practices of great capitalism. This same situation, on the contrary, is an argument against the socialization of land. Soviet Russia has an overall population of eight persons to the square kilometre ; European Russia, twenty-three. Poland had ninety before the war, and will have about the same when repatriation is completed. There is no place in Poland for the farms of one hundred thousand acres which are required to make Russian collective and state farming successful. Poland’s dense population compels an intense cultivation which can be achieved only on small individual farms, aided by co-operative organization for cheap seeds and fertilizer, common use of machinery, marketing, etc. Even the Polish Communists recognize this to be true. Indeed, they took the lead in asserting it, just as they did in putting through the law which allows Polish peasants to sell 82 per cent of their produce in a free

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market. The other 18 per cent is sold at low fixed prices in order to combat inflation and insure city workers against starvation. The workers complain about this division as lopsided. They go hungry, they say, while the wealthy Poles gorge themselves. But it prevents a political upheaval among peasants who are suffering themselves from loss of livestock and farm machinery, shortage of labour and the high prices of what they buy.

Poland's new economic system, though not written into law until 1946, was revealed to the world and made informally effective even before the country's complete liberation from Germany. Already it is being followed elsewhere in Europe. Czechoslovakia, a thoroughly non-communistic country, has decreed a system of state ownership virtually duplicating that of Poland. Sweden, which sought for years to control big private business by offering state competition, is now planning national ownership of banks, insurance companies and mines. In a country where iron mines play the part they do in Sweden, public ownership of them and of financial institutions carries control of the whole national economy. (Sweden, it should be noted also, has quietly given Poland the most extraordinary help in meeting the national crisis in health. Three complete hospitals of 480 beds each, with X-ray and operating equipment; a children's tuberculosis hospital of 1,000 beds, with wooden houses shipped from Sweden; a tuberculosis clinic; 2,000 extra hospital beds; vast quantities of medicine and serum to fight epidemics; large staffs of specialists—these are Sweden's gift to Poland, and even the motor trucks sent to transport them from the seaports were made an added gift. When I visited the eminent Warsaw surgeon, Professor Gruca, to ask him about his efforts to restore the leg muscles and nerves of two Polish girls horribly mutilated in German medical experiments at Ravensbrueck, every chair and table in his room was piled high with surgical instruments received that day from Sweden.)

General control of the national economy is implicit also

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in Poland's state ownership of key industries and banks. All private industries must draw their materials from state factories and mines. The state thus gets regulatory power over private industry, while private industry acquires an interest in the efficient operation of state-owned plants. It is too early to say whether the harmony thus built up will be a prevailing force. The danger is that it will be offset by the effects of competition between large public and small private enterprises, and by fear among private business men of future extension of the Socialist programme. Polish Communists, when asked whether they expect the ultimate establishment of a completely socialized economy, say yes, but not within thirty years.

New economic systems are not put into effect in a vacuum. To understand what Poland is trying to do, and what chance there is of doing it, one must know what the country is like after six years of war. That leads once to the tremendous drama of reconstruction, to the tragedy and heroism of the Polish people, to the crisis in transportation which renders all other crises more acute, to the great need for relief supplies and foreign credit. It brings up the complex and controversial question of Poland's relations with Russia, and the titanic, all-important task of settling the western territories which Poland has acquired from Germany. It leads to the distressing issue of anti-Semitism, to the campaign of the Polish government against armed and murderous fascist bands, to the mischievous propaganda of the former Polish Government-in-exile in London. It involves a free press and political economy. It requires study of a political struggle which for intensity and complexity rivals anything the United States can put on display.

This book is not an account of Poland's new economic system. It is a story of Poland itself, in which the thread of the new economy is interwoven with the life of the people.

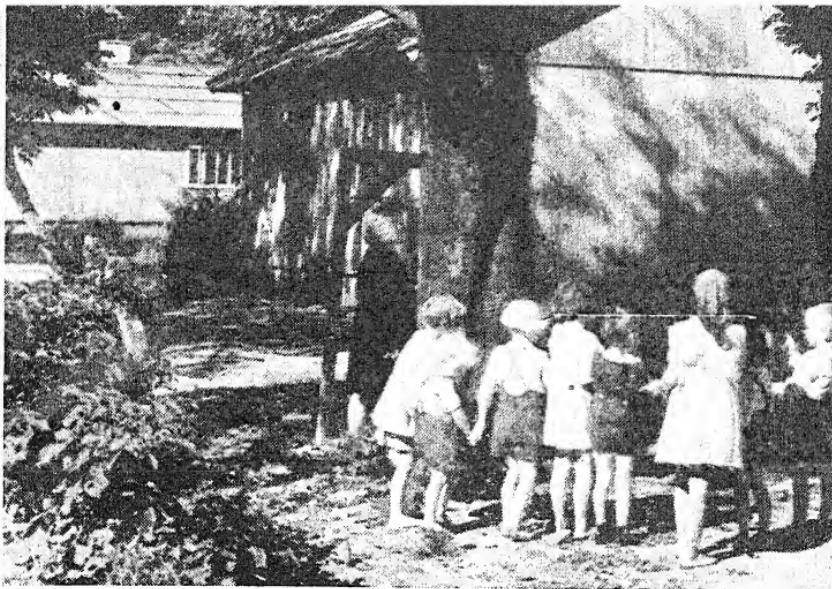
Washington D.C.,
February 1946.



WARSAW'S CHILDREN STUDY



LIFE STIRS



NURSERY IN PREFABRICATED HOUSES IN WARSAW



YOUTH CLEARING WROCLAW

Poland lives in Warsaw

An American enters Warsaw with the feeling that he has stepped out of the real world into something which could not possibly exist. These rows of roofless, doorless, windowless walls, reaching in parallel columns mile on mile, might have been dug out of the earth by an army of archaeologists.

The human beings streaming in endless columns through forsaken streets, threading their way through alleys and courtyards, following twisted shortcuts over rubble hills, do not seem to belong to the place at all.

They might be members of some nomadic tribe who had stumbled upon the site of the forgotten civilization of their ancestors, and were exploring the mysterious ruins to see what they were and what they might be good for.

This impression begins to change when one fixes his attention upon two objects. The first is an oval depression some 300 yards long, shaped like the gutted hull of a battleship with all the twisted steel of Pearl Harbour thrown up in the forward half until it casts a spectral shadow on the sky.

No archaeologist dug this out of the past with pick and shovel. Only the modern industrial age could produce this giant metallic shape, and only the demon force of modern war could reduce it to such tortured destruction. It is the ruins of the magnificent Warsaw railway station, once the loveliest object of its kind in Europe.

The other object, a scant mile away, is the shattered remains of Warsaw's solitary setback skyscraper, the Prudential Building. Its gaunt and roofless frame still rising nine stories above the surrounding structures.

In seven of these nine stories one can look completely through great gaping holes in the masonry, or even through the stark skeleton of structural steel, and see the sky beyond. This building was Poland's symbol of kinship with America, the land of skyscrapers and incredible achievement.

Transient visitors to Warsaw, such as military men on missions, are whisked through the ruined city in embassy cars. They receive a lifetime impression of wilful, wanton damage transcending the human imagination, but they have not seen the city.

To see it one must walk, as the Polish people do, from working place to sleeping place (terms like shop and home do not apply). They must go from section to section, observing the mounting pattern of Nazi ferocity and Polish courage.

Can it be that 350,000 people live in this shattered shell of a city, of which 80 per cent is termed officially destroyed—and nobody can find the other 20 per cent?

Here is an archway leading into a paved courtyard. A pathway is beaten in the rubble. Around the court rise the walls of a five-story apartment house—roof gone, floors gone, a few bits of shattered glass in the windows, rusty iron bathtubs hanging downward from twisted plumbing.

The wide path divides into many narrow ones, each leading into a cellarway half full of rubble, but with head clearance at the bottom.

Who lives in such caves? Everybody, except the few who have found an occasional room higher up, with floors and ceiling, or the luxury of a building which kept its roof through the fire.

Not one-tenth of the people of Warsaw have beds to sleep on, according to one government official, who added: "I am one of the nine-tenths. I sleep on straw." He holds a position only two grades below that of a member of the Polish cabinet.

Go northward to old Warsaw, not far from the Vistula. Here the last and most desperate stand of the Polish Underground took place. Unlike the systematic, wanton incendiaryism

which destroyed most of Warsaw, this part was pounded to pieces with artillery.

Along narrow streets, one follows hard-beaten paths over hills and valleys of brick and stone. On each side the rubble peaks rise higher and farther off the sky is cut with ragged shafts which rise at the corner of buildings.

Beyond Old Warsaw is the final field of Nazi vengeance, the Jewish ghetto. But here there is nothing to see. It is levelled to the ground as dead and silent as the 3,000,000 Polish Jews the Germans slaughtered.

When one has seen all this the city of Warsaw is no longer an unreality outside the world. It has become the centre of the world. All that lies outside is a distant triviality.

Now the endlessly passing people are no longer aimless wanderers. Two men carry bundles of wood for cooking fires. A man with a table and clothes closet on a too-small cart struggles to pull it over a heap of bricks. Two women go by with a full-length unbroken window, a marvellous treasure around which they will brick up some gaping wall.

The people of Warsaw are rebuilding it, and they are singing at the task. Tensions exist in this country, political tensions of dangerous import, but in this work all are united. Nowhere in the world is there more hope, more determination, than in these grown-up children who will not let Warsaw die.

Warsaw began building against winter, with mud-cemented bricks, broken boards and sheet iron. Facing hunger if not starvation, the people sing the Song of Warsaw, and place wreaths on walls spattered with bullets which went through the massed bodies of their lined-up friends and families.

They talk of the new Poland and the "wonderful America" which is sending UNRRA ships. The human spirit which buoys up these people is something to make the rest of the Western World bend its head in humility, or lift it in a universal pride.

The Crisis in Polish Relief

Say it with trucks and bulldozers.

That summarizes in a half-dozen words the urgent need of Poland for international help in rehabilitation. It does not cover the country's needs nor even its most pressing necessities. Food ships and heavy clothing in great quantities will be required to keep hundreds of thousands of Poles from starving or freezing.

Warsaw visitors feasting in hotel or restaurant and seeing high-priced eggs and vegetables heaped up in free market stalls have no idea of what faces millions of persons in a country devoid of transport, its houses burned, its livestock gone, its fields full of unexploded German mines, with most of the people lacking clothing, shoes and blankets.

The greatest problem is transport. Jan Stanczyk, Minister of Labour and Public Welfare, said to me: "We are getting help from UNRRA (the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) which has a fine organization in Poland. It is not sufficient because the need is so great.

"But when I get a shipment of food and other supplies the difficulty is in distribution. I have stocks of UNRRA goods in Lodz, for instance. The people there are very poor, but not so poor as in smaller places where they are really hungry and are without clothes and shoes.

"If they are not helped they cannot survive. With as few as 200 military trucks, if I had them now, it would be possible to distribute these goods in the smaller towns and villages.

"The same is true in other places. Trucks are coming, but all these things take too long. I am desperate."

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The Minister, one of the members of the London Government-in-exile who joined the Warsaw Government as a result of the Yalta agreement, picked up a sheaf of papers from his desk.

"Every morning," he said, "I get news from small places to which I can't bring food on account of transport difficulties. Here is a message from near Stolpce, where they could not grow crops because of German mines.

"Here the houses were destroyed and the people are living in foxholes with no food, no warm clothing. It would be best to bring them out of such places, but again we are faced with lack of transport."

A group of Polish officials was getting ready to fly to Paris to meet with American Army and Navy officers to discuss transfers of surplus war supplies to Poland.

They were aided by a transportation survey of the country, just completed by a transport troubleshooter of the State Department who did similar work in Iran and Egypt and has a background of commercial truck operations.

Later the Minister of Industry may go to the United States to discuss the larger aspects of rehabilitation. He is one of the five Communists in the coalition government but talks the language of American big business.

The greatest physical problem of all, in some ways, is the rebuilding of Warsaw. The Polish people, who have an inconceivable optimism on all subjects relating to themselves, believe that they are rebuilding it now.

Compared with what the city was last July, marvels have been done with hand labour in clearing streets and fashioning half-liveable rooms for 100,000 families. But they are putting up walls for machinery to knock down. Almost every building in the city must be added to the present rubble and it would take a hundred years to rebuild the city by the methods now in use. The Polish Government knows that this is a job for machinery.

Some officials have exaggerated ideas of what is needed. This is part of the national optimism and it has a possibly

THE CRISIS IN POLISH RELIEF

dangerous obverse side. The same officials, who have an over-large vision of what can be done with American machinery, may be led by pride in Polish agriculture to overestimate food stocks.

At any rate, while some machinery requests are too high, Poland is scarcely asking for enough food to avert starvation. UNRRA ships now coming to Poland have their cargoes divided into 25 per cent food, 25 per cent clothing and 20 per cent drugs. The remaining 30 per cent is broken up into various kinds of heavy equipment for industry, agriculture and transportation and light items like toilet articles.

Due to railroad damage, Poland is short of 20,000 freight cars. It needs about 25,000 trucks, compared with 20,000 before the war. UNRRA plans to furnish 15,000. Practically all travel about the country is in trucks furnished by Russia, and they go from city to city jammed with standing passengers.

The machine needs of Poland are infinite—bulldozers, trucks, road scrapers, tractors, concrete mixers and pavers, spiked harrows, steam shovels, excavators and dump trucks. The country needs power plants, machine shops, railway repair shops, auto repair shops, road repair equipment, electric cable and storage batteries.

It also needs army cots, bedding, clothing, lumber and hospital equipment.

In fact it might be shorter to list what it does not need. This is not for expansion of the national economy. It is a bedrock necessity to get things going to prevent the country from sinking into a worse chaos than that in which the Germans left it.

UNNRA cannot do it all. What Poland needs most quickly of all is a huge shipment of almost every kind of goods now piled up in American Army depots in Germany and France.

They should come and come fast if a people who survived the Nazi terror are to come through the aftermath of this terrible destruction.

Distribution of the first shipment of UNRRA shoes and

children's flannels through the Yablkowski department store in Warsaw brought such a surging mass of women that plate glass windows were broken and store fixtures damaged. The crowd was so huge and uncontrollable that it forced a revision of distribution methods. Henceforth UNRRA clothing will be distributed to the people at their places of employment.

The joy and satisfaction of Polish women at receiving these canvas leather-tipped shoes, for which they pay very low prices, is something pathetic. Their old shoes, of which they usually have one badly worn pair, cannot be half-soled, except at the cost of ten days' wages because all shoemakers are making expensive shoes for the handful of well-to-do people, instead of repairing them for the masses.

Brigadier Drury of Canada, new chief of UNRRA in Poland, was formally received by the Polish government on November 9th, the second anniversary of UNRRA's establishment. Food, clothing and medicines are now arriving in large quantities. Transportation of these supplies continues to be a problem, but by mid-autumn medicines in particular were going to hospitals throughout Poland.

Among the falsehoods which some anti-government Poles attempt to plant on American newspapermen is one that UNRRA's medicines go only to members of the Workers' party and especially not to Catholics. This statement is nonsensical to begin with, because no medicines go to individuals and nearly all Poles are Catholics. Medical supplies are distributed in two categories, first to hospitals, health centres and the army medical department, then to pharmacies for general sale.

To check further on this matter I went to the pharmaceutical division of the Ministry of Health and asked to see the individual order sheets showing the distribution of UNRRA medicines from warehouses. If they are going to the Workers' party and not to Catholics, the Communists must be adopting strange names. The records showed shipments of medicines, beds, mattresses, etc., to such institutions as the Asylum of the Holy Virgin; the Asylum of God's Providence, the Asylum of the

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Immaculate Sisters, all of Warsaw ; the hospitals of Saint Peter at Grojec, Saint Charles at Pulawy, Saint Lazarza at Krakow, Saint Vincent a Paolo at Lublin, and Child Jesus Hospital in Warsaw.

Here is another matter, however, which deserves congressional investigation. Inquiring about the distribution of relief supplies from Polish Relief (Rada Polonji), headed by Francis X. Swietlik, Dean of Marquette University, Milwaukee, was informed that not one ounce of supplies from this organization had ever reached Poland. During the past few years it has collected millions of dollars from Americans of Polish descent and has received added millions from the United States Government. Apparently this has been used exclusively for the benefit of Poles outside of Poland who have the blessing of the London emigres.

Relief shipments to Poland have been possible since June, 1944, but none have come. Now the relatives of Polish Americans who made these gifts are facing death by starvation and freezing.

A Nation Migrates

One of the greatest mass migrations in history is in progress in this land of seemingly impossible events. Rather, a half-dozen migrations are in progress at the same time, each presenting its own drama, its blend of tragedy and happiness, and its large quota of governmental headaches.

Beginning first, but not yet completed, is the movement of Germans westward across the Oder and Neisse Rivers, out of East and West Prussia and out of the former German portions of Pomerania and Silesia.

These territories, taken over by Poland with Russian support and Anglo-American consent, are being treated as parts of the Polish republic.

Almost 6,000,000 Germans fled before the Russian armies. Another 3,000,000 are now involved in the voluntary migration, of whom 1,500,000 are gone.

Next to start was the migration of Russian soldiers back to their homeland from the fighting front in Germany. Millions of armed uniformed men have been moving eastward for months, crowding railroad cars and motor trucks, or in long caravans of boat-shaped horse-drawn wagons.

Coinciding with this and outlasting it because of the tremendous magnitude, is the return of 7,000,000 Russian civilians and prisoners of war released from slave labour in Germany. Some 5,000,000 had gone through by October, 1945, travelling by truck on roads set aside for them in southern Poland—the nearest route to the old homes of most of them. Ukrainians, White Russians, Great Russians, Caucasians—they reflect the whole sweep of the German invasion from Leningrad

to the south of Stalingrad, but chiefly human loot of the Ukraine. About half of them are civilians and one-third of the total are women.

These great movements of nearly 11,000,000 Russians and 9,000,000 Germans across or out of Poland are a direct result of the clash of Soviet and Nazi armies. Barely less in magnitude and much more complicated in nature are the migrations of millions of Poles and hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians and White Russians, all moving across national boundaries.

In the west the Poles are returning as the Russians are—as slave labour coming home after their German war bondage. To these may be added the impending return of Polish armies now in Britain and Italy.

In the east it is not war but peace that produces the movement across national lines. It is a result, indeed, of the strangest migration of all—the territorial shift of Poland itself from east to west.

Losing one-third of her total 1921 to 1939 area to the Soviet Union, gaining lands from Germany equal to one-fifth of that pre-war area, Poland has played leap-frog westward. The Polish minority in the eastern third follows the shifting boundary and meets Ukrainians and White Russians moving east.

Also as a result of the territorial shift, 1,000,000 Poles are on the move inside the country, going from over-populated dwarf farms in middle and eastern Poland to new lands obtained from Germany.

Finally, a movement of wholly different nature is just beginning to get under way—from farm to city and mines, as industry revives with the prospect of much greater migration when plans for industrialization are carried out.

Counting only international movements and taking the lowest estimates of Polish repatriation, more than 25,000,000 are on the march in all the countries affected.

The main currents of this movement are the Russian refugees moving east and the Polish repatriates moving west across

the Bug River. Repatriation of the Poles is an economic and political problem, and a terrifically hard physical task for the Polish Government. However, it concerns Poland alone. The Russian movement, one of the most amazing events in modern history, is not only something to look at but an event of critical importance, both in the politics of Poland and in Russia's international relations.

There are two main facts that should be understood :

1. The Russians, with Poland's consent, continued their wartime control over the railroad system, seaport and many highways to manage the exodus. This control has been partly relinquished now but still causes apprehension and gives a handle to anti-government and anti-Soviet propaganda.
2. Russia's army has no supply system in the American sense. It lived off the country while driving the Nazis back to Berlin, and kept on living off the country during its return to Russia.

On this second point, the Russian command—to accomplish this—stripped all occupied German territories, including those transferred to Poland.

This land was considered Polish, but the horses, cows, hogs and chickens remained German. There was some logic and more necessity in this, but when the new Polish settlers arrived to find empty pastures, they raised loud protests.

Trekking eastward across Poland, Russian soldiers maintained the same forage system they employed when going west. Polish peasants, grateful for the liberation, gave food willingly.

But after four years of marching and fighting, the end of the war caused a collapse in discipline. Lawless or intoxicated soldiers committed excesses which embittered the peasant population, dimming in many the deep gratitude for liberation.

Marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky made stern efforts to maintain order. Seven hundred Russian soldiers, including a number of officers, have been condemned to death within the last three months, chiefly for robbery and pillaging of houses; but also for committing, or not preventing,

murder and rape. There is no national animus in this.

Russian regiments containing women—regiments once notable for good behaviour—are now reported unsafe for feminine members.

Peasants also recognize the Polish-type horses and cows in wagon caravans and the herds of “beef on the hoof,” which furnish food en route or are being driven to restock the Nazi-pillaged Ukraine. These, the Poles say, were stolen from their country by the Germans, but to the Russians any horse found in a German pasture is a German horse. German horses also look Polish to the Poles.

Educated Poles either regard these things as part of the war itself or use them politically against the Government.

To offset adverse impressions, the Government publishes records of German livestock distributed by the Russians in western Poland, from 10,000 to 70,000 in some localities. Belgian-type horses, undoubtedly brought from Germany by the Russians, are sold in the Warsaw horse market.

But these explanations do not satisfy the peasants who lost their own livestock to the Nazis, nor do they feel better when told that all armies contain marauders. This trouble is disappearing as the troop migration nears its end.

The movement of Russian refugees is another matter. These pitiable victims of German terror travel on truck-trains eight or ten miles long. They pour through Breslau toward the railroad concentration centre of Opole (Oppeln).

Driving westward along the road’s edge while they go east, you pass a truck every three seconds—210 in ten minutes by one actual count. This may keep up all day, broken only by brief intervals between truck-trains.

The closely-herded occupants are happy people, despite their hardships, and happier still when they crowd into freight cars and gondolas at Opole.

Polish Repatriation

In the United States one often hears that the millions of Poles outside of Poland are afraid to return, or that the Polish Government does not want them or that Russia will not let them go.

If these things are not true, it is asked, then why the long delay? Why not open the frontiers and let them cross?

Nobody would speak thus after seeing what is being done in repatriation in the face of incredible difficulties.

It is being performed with so little transportation equipment that the difficulties are doubled. Practically every Polish family coming from Russia must be provided a new home. This must be done in territories devastated by contending armies and the scorched earth policy of the retreating Germans.

Finally, the Polish Government has neither a field administration great enough for the task nor the means of suppressing banditry near the frontiers. As a result, the Poles come into their country under conditions appalling to Americans but cheerfully or stolidly accepted here as part of the hard life peasants have known for centuries.

They are, however, coming home. From the eastern provinces ceded to Russia, where a Polish minority lived among Ukrainians and White Russians, 600,000 Poles had been repatriated up to October, 1945, and 800,000 more were registered to come back.

The decision is voluntary. Polish officials go among them and ask whether they want to stay or come. The great majority want to come.

In other parts of Russia, about 400,000 Poles out of the

million scattered over the country after 1939 were getting ready for a return before the end of the year. This makes a total of slightly under 2,000,000 repatriated or ready for repatriation.

In the west the movement had just started in October, with 500,000 to come out of the American zone, the same number from the British zone and an unstated number from the Russian zone and elsewhere.

As long as the London Polish exile government existed, a powerful propaganda campaign was waged by it, with the support of the British Government, to keep the Poles from returning.

“Don’t go back to Bolshevik Poland. You will be sent to Siberia,” was the cry.

If there is such a thing as “Bolshevik Poland,” I have not yet found it, and the propaganda has failed. But now to get them home—that is the rub.

This work is rated so high that the Ministry of Administration, headed by Wladyslaw Kiernik, might as well be called the ministry of repatriation. The chief repatriation office is in Lodz. There are 60 branch centres and 200 stopping places for families crossing the country. Each place has one doctor. There are only 500 persons on the entire sanitary staff, supplemented by the efficient, heavily overworked Polish Red Cross, which keeps a 24-hour vigil for arriving trains at such key transit points as Katowice.

Physical conditions in the return from Russia are pitiable, but there is no anti-Polish animus in it—Russian refugees suffer similarly. Because of the lack of trains, peasants may have to wait two or three weeks at assembly centres, though some go quickly.

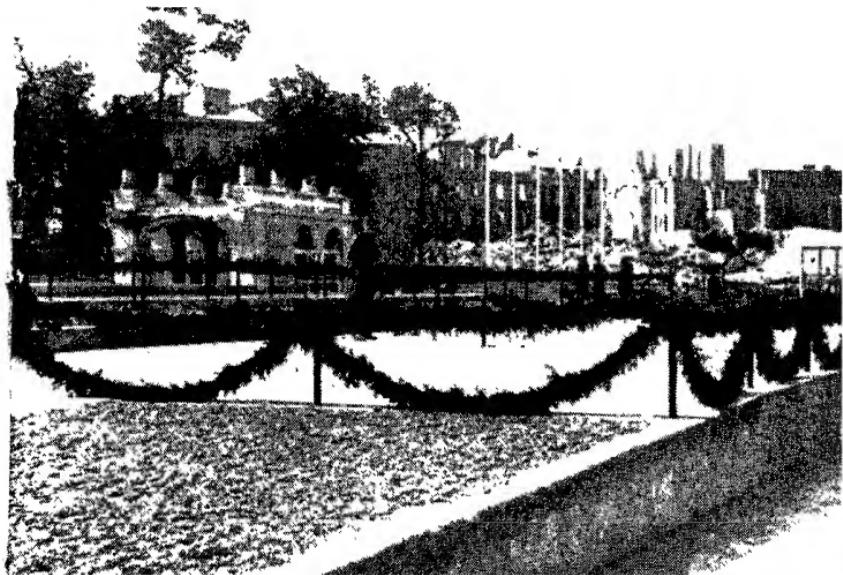
Packed into boxcars and open gondolas, which also contain livestock and all the family property up to two tons, they move slowly toward the frontier. Giving way to more urgent traffic, their trains may spend days on sidings.

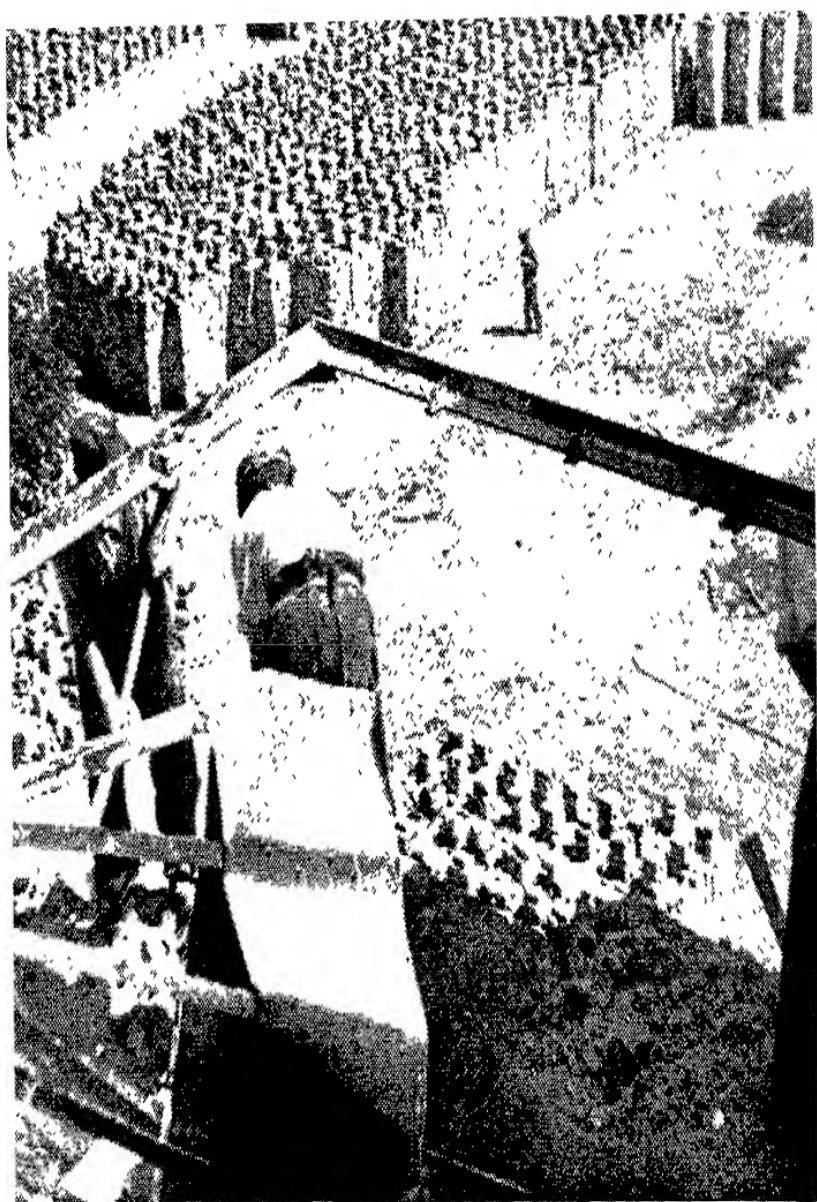
On the Polish side, it is the same, often with hunger added



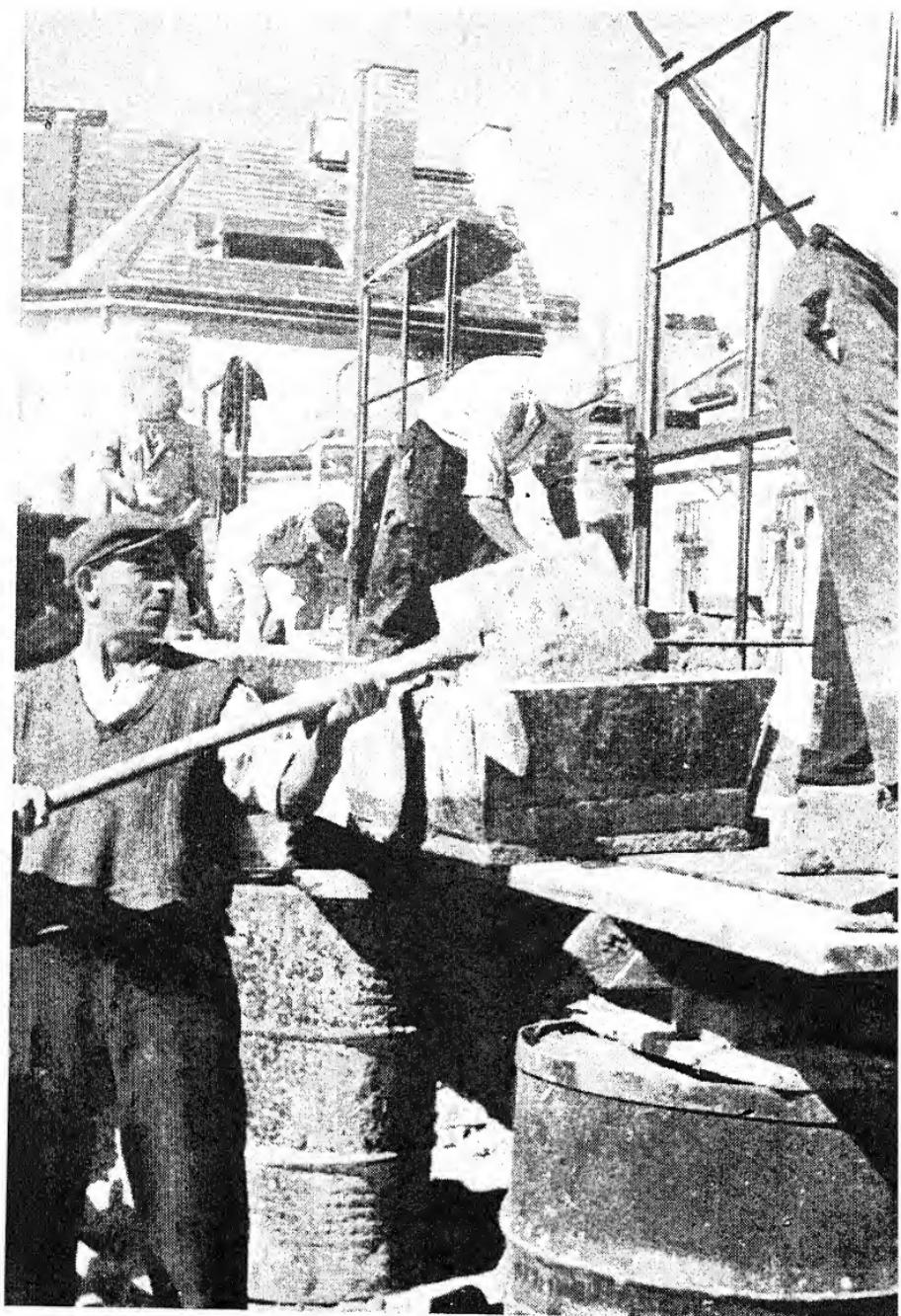
SASKI SQUARE IN WARSAW BEFORE CLEARING

SASKI SQUARE IN WARSAW AFTER CLEARING

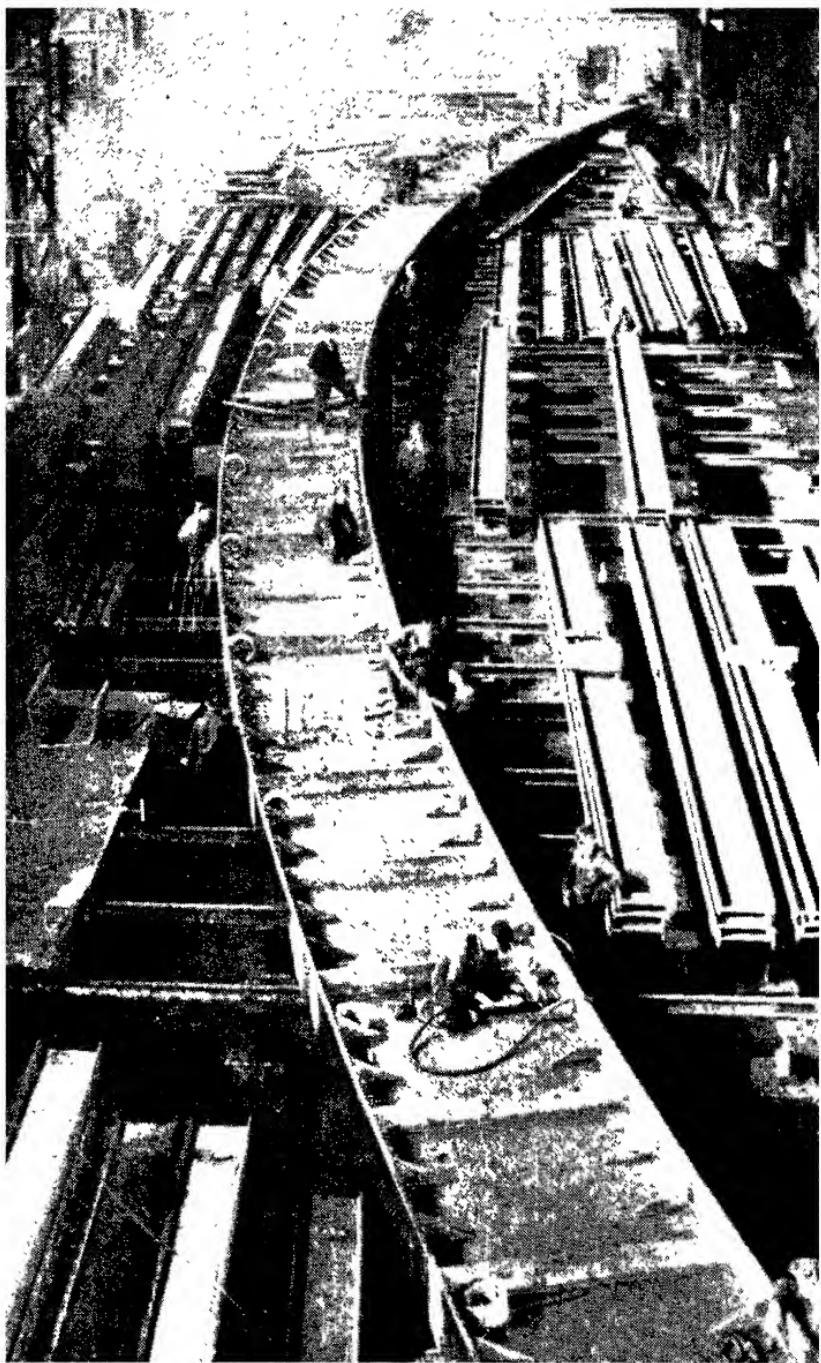




CLEARING THE SITE FOR THE NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT



BUILDING AGAIN



PONIATOWSKI BRIDGE, ARCHES IN FOUNDRY



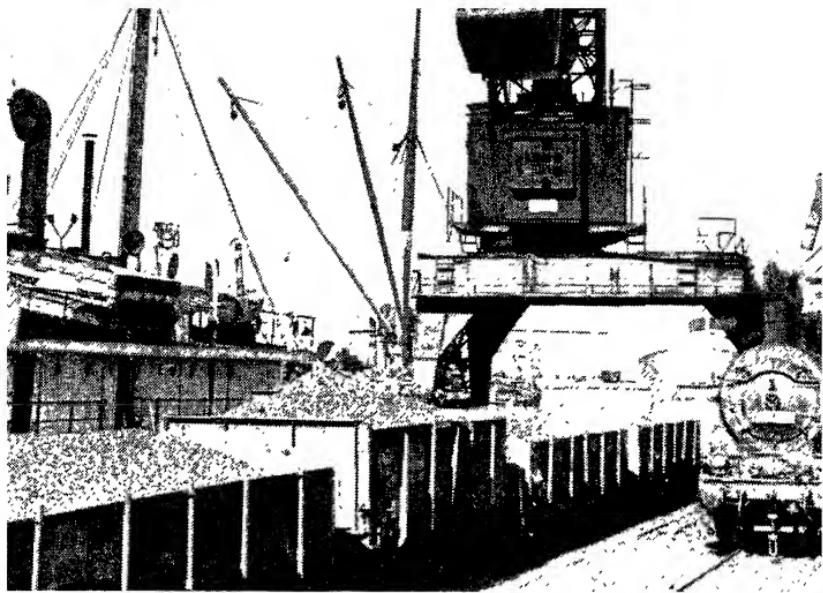
PONIATOWSKI BRIDGE, ARCHES IN POSITION



UNRRA PARCELS

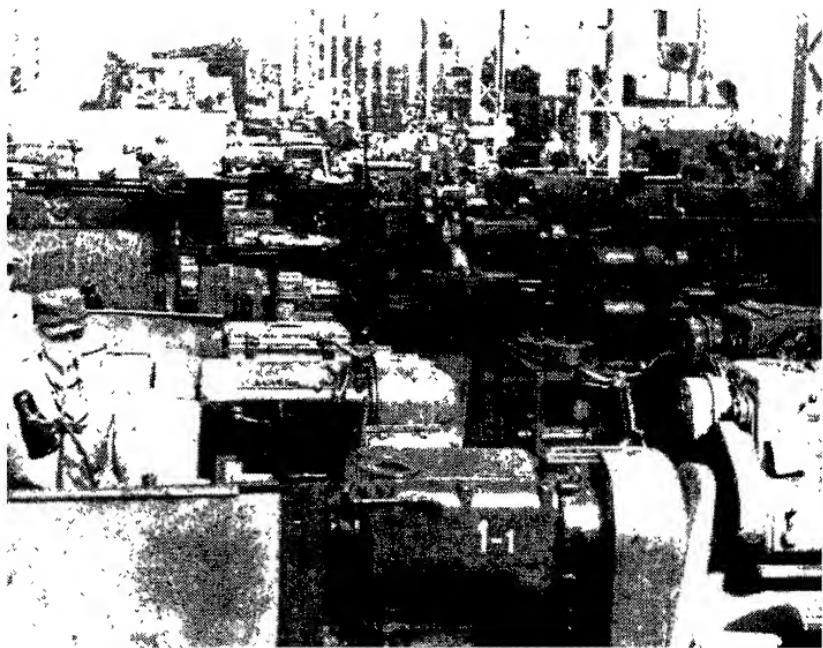
REPATRIATION CENTRE





COAL IN GDANSK

LOCOMOTIVE FACTORY



POLISH REPATRIATION

and the ever-present danger of losing food, clothing and livestock to bandits.

The patience of the people under these sufferings is a marvel. They tell their story—even the story of children dying from malnutrition—as if it had always been so and always would be. But they hope for “big” 25-acre farms in western Poland—farms that will belong to them and not to Polish landlords—and that is like going into a new world.

The first train of Poles to leave the American zone in Germany got under way on October 1st. These Poles were in much worse shape physically than those from Russia, because they were Nazi slaves, but the American Army has given them warm clothing and plenty of food.

They enter Poland in former German territory which contains Russian garrisons. These began recently to clean up terrorist gangs recruited from the Fascist extreme of the Polish underground, Russian Army deserters and Polish youths demoralized by the war.

The chief problem in repatriation from the west is promptly to take away the 6,000 Poles arriving daily at border transfer points which do not have facilities to handle two days' contingents.

Among other nationalities 1,500,000 Germans still remain out of the original 9,000,000. Their departure was formerly compulsory. It is now voluntary and many show signs of staying, which may revive the compulsory rule.

250,000 Ukrainians near Lublin and Rzeszow voluntarily left Poland. I asked Wladyslaw Wolski, Deputy Minister of Public Administration, why they went to the Communist state. “They want to be inside their own country,” he answered.

The strength of national ties was revealed when 60 per cent of the Polish army in England, asked whether they desired to return immediately to Poland, answered yes. It was a decision to give up the shelter, food and pay in the British armed forces and come back to the cold and hunger in Poland.

President Bierut Looks Ahead

In the first press conference held by the head of the new Polish Government, President Boleslaw Bierut told American and British correspondents that Poland desires to be completely independent of all outside powers.

He said that the freest possible kind of democratic elections will be held as soon as the repatriation of 6,000,000 Poles has been completed in its larger aspects.

The security of Poland and the peace of Europe, he declared, depend upon the establishment of friendly relations between Poland and the Soviet Union, which, he emphasized, does not mean that Poland will adopt the Russian political or economic systems.

Bierut, a chunky man of 53, is the son of a Lublin peasant. He was linked, until election, with the left wing Polish workers. He spoke through an interpreter with a shrewdness and comprehension which justified his reputation as part of the governmental brain trust.

Written questions were presented and translated for him. He took a quarter of an hour to study them.

Beginning with the query as to the future pattern of the Polish state, he spoke for an hour in answer to this and other questions.

He answered oral questions freely, although he side-stepped the dispute with Czechoslovakia over the future of Teschen. He did repudiate, however, the violent methods by which the old government of Poland seized this territory in 1938, but said it was inhabited by Poles and that its disposition should be determined by negotiations between the two nations.

NEW LIFE IN POLAND

Poland had made several unaccepted propositions, he said, but seemed unwilling to go into details.

The date of the Polish elections, Bierut declared, depends more on the Western Allies than on Poland. A quarter of the entire population of the country is still outside its borders. 3,000,000 are still in Russia, and 3,000,000 more are in western Europe, he said.

"Repatriation has begun in the west and is taking a swifter tempo every day," he said. "The chief difficulties arise from lack of transportation, but it is hoped that this soon will be solved with the aid of the Western Allies and Soviet Russia."

Asked whether the Potsdam declarations did not bind Poland to hold the elections in the spring of 1946, Bierut said that was not a date to which the government was bound, but was "more or less the estimated time, taking the repatriation difficulties into account." With sufficient aid in transportation, this obstacle might be overcome in a few months, he added.

Despite the country's devastation by the war, he said that Poland's future will be very great if good political and economic relations are maintained with the Western and Eastern Allies.

Physical destruction is not the greatest of the country's difficulties. Six million Polish citizens—Jews and Poles—were killed during the German occupation. Other millions still outside the country, but wishing to return, must not only be transported, but housed, as so many homes were destroyed.

Because Poland lost territory in the east and gained it in the west, the geographic foundation of the country has been changed, Bierut declared. This forces a vast displacement of persons and creates the problem of establishing normal conditions of life for them in the west.

Before the war, Poland was backward in comparison with other countries—not culturally, he hastened to add—but in an economic sense. Reforms which should have been undertaken 150 years ago must be put into effect now. The peasants have been forced to migrate to other European countries and overseas in great numbers because they had too little land.

P R E S I D E N T B I E R U T L O O K S A H E A D

"The people of Poland knew long before the war," he continued, "that one of the most important problems was to give the peasants land to live on. The landowners had too much influence then.

"It is only now that the country is able to solve this problem. This land reform has had a profound influence upon the country and probably will influence its whole future."

Foreigners from better-favoured states find it hard to understand some of the things wrong in Poland, Bierut said. He added that once they realize the nature of the difficulties they will see that the problems could only be solved by a new people who come with a new standpoint.

Bierut denied that the present course of events in Poland is due to the Soviet Union, as he has often read in the foreign press.

"The Polish people understand what their old government did not understand," he declared, "that the people of Poland, being so near to Russia, must live in good relations with the Soviet Union. The danger of German aggression is not over, and the Polish people know it. Also, being akin to other Slav nations which are inside the Soviet Union, they feel the need of cultural relations with that country."

Turning to the economic life of Poland, he described the land reforms now in progress. Agriculture will be based on small holdings by farmers engaged in individual efforts. Two-thirds of the people are now peasants, but after a few years the ratio will be more favourable to commerce. "Poland within its new borders," Bierut said, "is in better condition than before the war, because the territories gained in the West are of a higher economic order than the areas lost in the East."

The socialization of industry was described as a war effort "independent of the will of the people" by Bierut.

"The large factories and trusts with plants destroyed by the Germans are now ownerless. The important industries—mining, textiles, metallurgy—are now in the hands of the state. Otherwise it would be impossible to start them up again.

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“Private initiative can find its way in the smaller concerns. It is not stopped: but on the contrary, especially in trade, is greatly helped by the state.”

Industrial Revival

Foreign capital and foreign technicians are needed, and will be welcomed for the reconstruction of Poland, Hilary Minc, Supply Minister in the provisional government, said at an international press conference.

Asked whether pre-war foreign investors had been, or will be, compensated for nationalized industries, Minc said that experts will deal with every such case, but the question has not arisen because no industries have been nationalized.

The Government, Minc said, has stepped in to operate industries made ownerless by the war—industries that would otherwise be idle.

Some will be nationalized; some will go back to private ownership, and some to co-operative associations or to regional or municipal control, Minc said.

The Supply Minister is a 42-year-old Communist, who looks and talks like a progressive president of a U.S. chamber of commerce.

His refusal to push Polish industry into rapid socialization, caused a Socialist to make this classic remark about him:

“Minc no longer has a single ‘ism.’ All he thinks of is getting the factories running.”

Asked what he expected to accomplish in his projected trip to the United States, where he has never been, the Minister said it was uncertain whether he would go, but the Polish Government delegation now in America has two objects:

1. The “normalizing” of Poland’s international relations.
2. An enlarged agreement for trade and credit along the lines laid down at the Potsdam conference.

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Minc furnished detailed figures of Poland's trade with Russia since the war, indicating that Poland was sending coal, steel, zinc, cement and cotton textiles to the Soviet Union, in order to get raw materials for immediate use in heavy industries and in textile factories and other plants.

He expects a steady expansion of trade with Russia, based on an even balance between exports and imports, but said it would not exceed trade with western countries.

He said Poland looks to the United States and England especially for factory machines and electrical and transport equipment.

Answering questions about economic conditions in the territories acquired from Germany, Minc said that Poland and Russia divided German industrial equipment, Poland retaining 75 per cent.

A one-billion zloty investment fund has been set up to start new industries there. (It is impossible to translate this amount into dollars, because the present fantastic exchange rate bears no relation to the domestic value of the zloty).

Private industry will be welcome in these new territories and an effort will be made to build up the Polish middle class of small industrialists and artisans to replace the German middle class, which has disappeared, Minc said.

Without such surroundings, heavy industry cannot operate, the Minister asserted—a remark which, coming from a workers' party leader, suggests a non-Communist trend in Poland's socialization programme.

Minc emphasized Poland's shortage of industrial labour and predicted the return of many Poles who went abroad because of the farming over-population and recurring industrial depressions before the war. All will be welcomed back, he declared.

He listed the number of workers employed in the principal government-operated industries : coal 162,000, textiles 120,000, foundries 76,000, sugar 50,000, metals 43,000, building materials 18,000, chemicals 17,000, oil 9,000.

INDUSTRIAL REVIVAL

Wage rates, Minc said, are used to regulate the flow of labour. Highest wages are paid in the industries where production needs are greatest or there is excess machinery—8.60 zlotys per hour in building materials, 7.70 in coal mines and textiles, ranging downward to 5.60 in metals. This does not accurately reflect buying power because all workers in government plants buy supplemental food and clothing under a card system, at prices far below the free market level.

Poland's Political Parties

Polish leaders are engaged to-day in three lines of vigorous endeavour.

They are seeking to master the economic crisis produced by the war, devastation and altered boundaries.

They are trying to set up a new economic system—nationalization of big business with free enterprise in small business and on the farms, which, if successful, may be Eastern Europe's mild substitute for Communism.

While acting together in these two efforts, they are engaged in as lively a contest for political power and position as ever was seen anywhere.

This contest took shape when Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, the Peasant party leader who came from London to join the Provisional Government, decided to establish a new peasant party and seek the premiership in the coming elections.

Explaining the Polish elections to Americans is about as hard as teaching them to pronounce Krzywoprzysiezca, which, if you are interested means perjury and must be very rare.

In the United States, persons of all kinds of political beliefs gather in one party which has two contradictory programmes and battle another similar party, which has no programme.

In Poland, voters having the same beliefs divide into many parties, all having the same programme. The Poles and Americans are alike in one respect. All want office and power.

Poland's provisional government was chosen in the winter of 1944-45 by the National Council representing four political parties in the Polish underground.

By an advance agreement with Russia, tests for inclusion

of the parties in the coalition were: first, that they must favour friendly relations with the Soviet Union, second, be willing to work with the Communist party of Poland, and third, agree to give up Poland's pre-war Eastern frontier.

The four parties that met these tests are the Polish Socialist party (P.P.S.), the Polish Workers' party (P.P.R.), the Peasant party and the Democratic party.

The Polish Socialist party is represented by Edward Osubka-Morawski, who negotiated the Moscow agreement and became revolutionary Poland's first premier.

The Polish Workers Party is Communistic, but includes non-Communists. The Peasant party had then a Left Wing leadership from which the more conservative elements later broke away to form the Polish Peasant party headed by Mikolajczyk. The Democratic party is composed of moderate Left Wing intellectuals.

The Provisional Government received U.S. and British recognition after it was enlarged last June in accordance with the Yalta agreement.

This brought in Mikolajczyk and Jan Stanczyk, Peasant and Socialist members of the London group of Poles, also two elder statesmen from inside Poland, the late Peasant leader, Wicenty Witos, and the Independent, Stanislaw Grabski.

The National Council then voted to legalize any political party which accepted the Yalta and Potsdam agreements. Broadly speaking, this means any non-Fascist party which accepts Poland's new boundaries.

The new council decides whether the party meets this test. This system excludes all extreme Right Wing parties. The anti-Semitic and Fascistic National Radicals, likewise the left-over remnants of the dictatorship of Marshal Pilsudski and Col. Joseph Beck and the organized followers of the London Polish exiles, are driven underground.

Since these outlawed groups are the only important ones supporting or supported by capitalism, the virtual effect is the outlawing of capitalism as the dominant institution.

POLAND'S POLITICAL PARTIES

Left Wing Poles say that they would resist its re-establishment forcibly. They identify it with the Right Wing dictatorship and foreign intervention. This, however, has no application to present-day political affairs, since all the major parties are wholly or partly socialistic.

Thus, out of the Big Three conference decisions to ban the Fascist parties, there has been created what Left Wing elements call a limited democracy, part way between the full democracy of the United States and Britain on one hand and Russia's one-party system on the other.

This is forced on Poland, for the present, by its geographical position next to Russia and by the plotting of the anti-Russian and Fascistic groups, whose success would put an end to both internal freedom and national independence.

Other Poles of the democratic coalition, but not of the extreme left, see things a bit differently.

They, too, want the Fascist parties excluded. They support government ownership of utilities, mines and large factories. They denounce capitalism and want the large estates divided among the peasants.

But, these political moderates say, Poland has a nominated government, not an elected one. This government can say which parties are legal. The Left Wing ministers control the army and the police. The Polish Press is under government regulation and under government censorship.

How can we feel sure, ask these Poles, that the Government does not want to limit the political rights of those entitled to participate in it.

Other factors deepen the cleavage. What follows is a splitting of the parties, not between the Right and Left, for there is no Right, but between the Left and Centre.

The Peasant party is split completely in two, with Mikolajczyk's following variously estimated at between 50 and 70 per cent of the Peasant voters.

The "old Socialists," led by the pre-war party president, Zygmunt Zulawski of Krakow, seek a broader guarantee of

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democracy than they have yet secured from the present leaders of the P.P.S., but the contest remains within the Socialist party.

Karel Popiel is forming the Catholic Labour party, which will be the only party without any Socialism in its platform. The 75-year-old Grabski has the forlorn task of acting as peacemaker among all these political warriors, but he is essentially of the Centre group.

Mikolajczyk vs. Gomulka

The formation of a new Peasant party by Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, the former Premier of the London Government in exile, who accepted the bid of the Provincial Government to enter the Warsaw Cabinet, is bitterly resented by strong supporters of the present Coalition Government.

They accuse him of seeking to make political advantage out of the misery caused by the Nazi devastation, jeopardizing the friendship with Russia by accepting the support of anti-Soviet elements and of endangering the country's economic programme by rallying its critics instead of helping to cure its defects.

This estimate overlooks Mikolajczyk's basic strength, which is the Peasant opposition to Communist leadership and pro-Soviet leaning in the Provisional Government.

He becomes, however, a political threat to the Government because of his "protest support." His party rakes in the peasants who blame the Government for the misconduct of the Russian soldiers, high prices, scarcity of goods, lack of transportation facilities between village and city and, indeed, for all the discomforts produced by war.

Mikolajczyk also gains an advantage from the absence of Right Wing parties. Flocking to his standard are dispossessed landlords and factory owners, small businessmen fearing Government ownership, anti-Soviet Catholic groups, and even the anti-Semitic National Radicals.

Consequently, Mikolajczyk's party is shifting from its original basis as a peasant party to one of general membership, through which the Right Wingers threaten to exercise greater

political power than if they had had their own parties.

The greatest paradox of all is that Mikolajczyk's supporters include both sincere advocates of genuine democracy and Right Wing dictatorial elements engaged in underground revolutionary activities against the Government.

If an election were held with this situation prevailing, it would create a real threat of civil war. But all indications point to more normal economic conditions and greater political stability as 1946 advances, which should ease the political situation.

The Coalition Government possesses one great advantage. It can fix the date of the election.

"We will follow the example of the British Conservatives," a Left Wing spokesman told me, "and choose the moment when we are the strongest. We hope to have better luck than Winston Churchill."

Asked which factors would increase the Government's political strength, he replied :

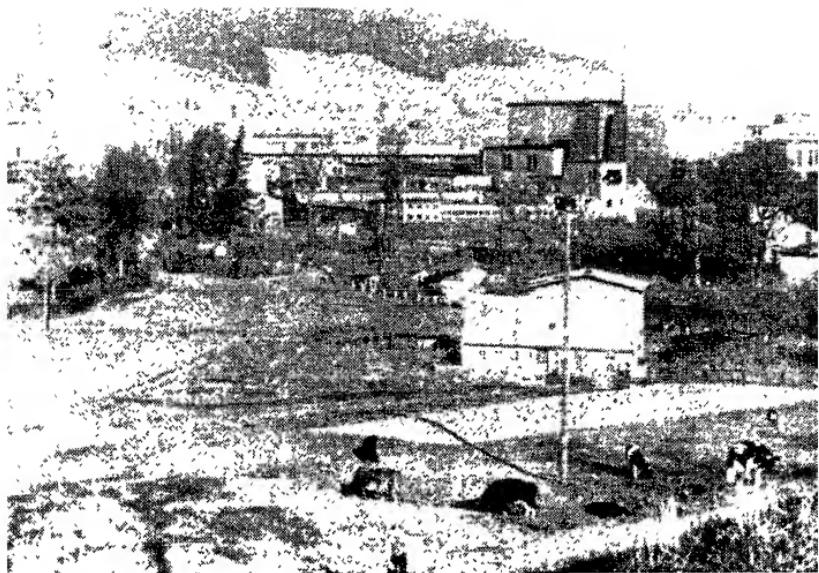
1. Improvement of transport and increased production of goods, relieving shortages and ending the complaints of peasants that they get nothing in return for the portion of their crops sold to the Government at low prices.

2. The return of Poles from abroad. Those coming from the east find their conditions improved. Those coming from the west find conditions better than London propaganda led them to expect. All are determined to keep their new farms. They support the Government despite their present hardships.

3. Departure of Russian troops, whose presence impairs the Government's support both among the peasants and the urban dwellers.

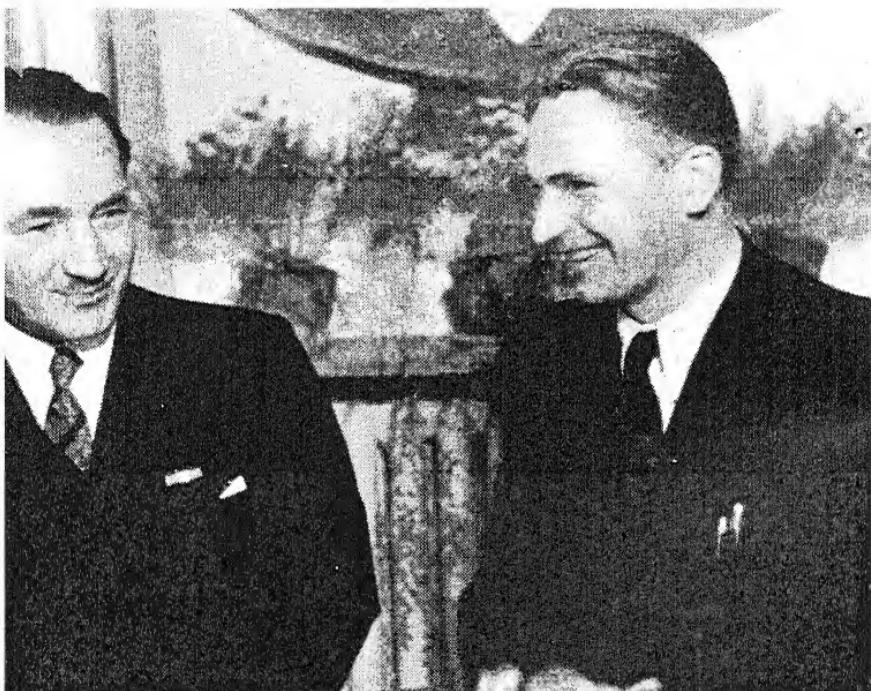
All of these changes are expected to come at about the same time. They furnish the reason for President Bierut's statement that the elections will follow the return of the Poles from abroad.

Two other long-range factors threaten to weaken Mikolajczyk, who might win an election held to-day.



INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE GET GOING





PRESIDENT BIERUT AND PRIME MINISTER OSOBKA-MORAWSKI



THE GOVERNMENT BENCH IN PARLIAMENT



PRESIDENT BIERUT (with hat) QUEUING OUTSIDE POLLING STATION DURING NATIONAL REFERENDUM

MIKOŁAJCZYK VS. GOMULKĀ

He has lost the powerful help of the late Wincenty Witos, the old trusted Peasant leader who died in October, 1945, in a Krakow hospital. Mikolajczyk also is meeting a counter-attack because of his Right Wing supporters.

His opening campaign statement in his new newspaper, "Peasant Standard," declared that he was founding a socially radical party which offered "loyal co-operation with all parties of the Government coalition."

He declared for the nationalization of the most important industries, railways and banks, promised distribution of the Junkers estates in East Prussia and East Germany among the peasants, and action calculated "not to leave a single German on Polish territory."

His nationalization statement was softened by remarks about regulation of cartels which could not exist under the Government's programme.

The vice-Premier, Wladyslaw Gomulka, replied by calling Mikolajczyk the Trojan horse of the reactionaries.

Quoting praise of him by the underground Fascist Press, the anti-Soviet clericals and the London emigres, Gomulka told his followers that instead of repudiating this association, Mikolajczyk and his associates "keep discreet silence and don't answer offers of collaboration made to them publicly by the reactionaries."

Gomulka declared that the actual purpose of some in the new group is to "isolate the Workers' party from the national life and Polish democracy."

All Polish political elements agree that if Mikolajczyk becomes Premier, his first effort will be to convince Soviet Russia of his complete friendship. This will compel him to continue the coalition whether he desires it or not.

The basic difference between Mikolajczyk and the group he opposes is that he thinks in terms of political offices for himself and his followers, they of fundamental national policies. On account of his adroitness, this enables him to build a strong following of diverse elements, and leaves him free to support

NEW LIFE IN POLAND

or oppose the policies of his opponents. But it imparts a certain fragility to his position. To illustrate: when Mikolajczyk was in London, before he entered the enlarged Government, he argued vigorously against the Russian proposal to extend Poland's boundary westward to the Oder and Neisse Rivers. At the Potsdam conference, he told the American delegation that he did not like the annexation of the West, but could not very well ask less for Poland than Russia had said Poland should have. This moderation made Mikolajczyk very popular with the Americans.

However, when Mikolajczyk returned to Poland from Potsdam, his leading supporter, Professor Kot, blazoned the claim in the public press that Mikolajczyk, and Mikolajczyk alone, won the Oder-Neisse boundary for Poland. With the entire Polish people fanatically demanding retention of the western territories as the basis of future national greatness, that gave Mikolajczyk a tremendous political boost, but not necessarily a permanent one.

The intensification of Poland's strife is due to the fact the an economic revolution is being carried on before the political revolution has been completed.

It is impossible to apply peacetime standards during a revolution, and exceedingly dangerous, in my opinion, to push for their immediate adoption.

Poland has a far greater need for railroad rolling stock, motor trucks, bulldozers, gasoline, warm clothing and food this winter than for even the best advice about its political affairs.

Radkiewicz Talks on Security

The hardest subject to discuss with confidence in Poland is the matter of public security and the methods taken to maintain it.

This can start from only one premise—that Poland is in a state of suppressed revolution due to the activities of the old London Government in exile.

On the eve of leaving Warsaw, I spent several hours with the Minister of Public Security, M. Stanislaw Radkiewicz, questioning him on points that had come into question during my two months' stay in the country. This was his first meeting with any correspondent.

Radkiewicz is the mystery man of the Polish Government. Almost completely inaccessible and unknown to the public, he is pictured by most foreigners and all the anti-Government Poles as a Russian agent who spends his time seizing critics of the Government and deporting them to the Soviet Union.

He is a young and handsome man, with black hair and aquiline features, and wears a snappy black suit cut wide in the shoulders. His manner is pleasant, but he hardens as he talks of Poland's internal enemies. I asked him to explain the development of his department.

"At the very beginning," he said, "we were handicapped by the inexperience of our youthful security forces. The ideal of patriotism, which we found in various democratic organizations, enabled us to build a new and different apparatus for the defence of democratic ideas.

"Our first aim was to clean the country of Hitlerian remnants. The withdrawing German army left its spy system—

people who are hated by the nation. Despite the total German defeat, they tried to keep up their organization. Even to-day 50 per cent of the efforts of our department are devoted to them.

"We are still catching members of the S.S. (Elite Guard) and the Gestapo who fled into the forests from their work in the Maidanek and Oswiecim (Auschwitz) concentration camps. They formed gangs which assaulted the security forces and individual citizens."

Radkiewicz said his second task also dates from the beginning of the liberation.

"That," he said, "is to deal with anti-democratic elements in the country—to render them harmless."

"Foremost among these was the former Polish Government in London. Though it has disappeared, it is still in action against Poland.

"While we were still in Lublin, concerned only with the liberation of Poland, the London group stimulated its military organization."

This organization, said Radkiewicz, hampered the efforts of the Polish mobilization against Germany and attacked the liberating armies.

"Hundreds of Polish and Russian soldiers," he continued, "were murdered by them. That was what led to the trial of Gen. Leopold Okulicki, leader of the A.K. (Polish Home Army). That is why our accounts are not yet finished, and why the Polish nation will never forget that crime of theirs."

"We had to paralyze the activity of these forces. There were arrests and verdicts. We are not ashamed of that. It was a painful thing to fight against Poles at the beginning of our free existence, but those who attacked us must take the responsibility for all the victims."

A change, Radkiewicz said, had occurred since the recognition of the Provisional Government in June, 1945.

"The mass of A.K. soldiers began to realize the truth and turned away from their leaders. The Government decided then

RADKIEWICZ TALKS ON SECURITY

to proclaim that no revenge be taken on those who agreed to give up their arms and register.

"Over 50,000 have done so and are now honestly and quietly working."

The Security Minister named two other armed organizations operating against the Government, the National Military Force (N.S.Z.) and the National Democrats.

"The N.S.Z. is led by Bielecki of the London Government, the closest friend of the army leader, General Anders. This organization has had a bad reputation in the country from the time of its collaboration with the German secret police. It sent officers to be trained in a German school for spies in Prague. After Germany's defeat the whole school entered the London Polish army of General Anders. Earlier, when Poland was half liberated we caught scores of parachute jumpers from that school with their German documents on them. During the occupation they destroyed several of the best partisan regiments, and they still have gangs performing acts of common terror in the country."

Minister Radkiewicz named the rural districts around Bialystok, Lublin, Warsaw, Lodz and Krakow as the centres of anti-Government armed activity. These gangs, he said, murdered some hundreds of people "not even politically engaged; just democrats. They recently murdered a delegation of workers on their way to Silesia to obtain coal. They hanged a Jewish member of the Workers' party in the ruins of the Warsaw ghetto two weeks ago. We found his body yesterday."

Asked for specific figures, the Minister brought a sheaf of records showing 80 murders by Fascist gangs in October, 1945. In September, he said, the N.S.Z. invaded the village of Wierzchowiny, near Lublin, and killed over 300 men, women and children, because the village was opposed to terroristic activities. "We caught the gang a month later," Radkiewicz went on. "40 were liquidated in the fighting; 20, including the leaders, were arrested."

These gangs, the Minister said, are a mixture of local people,

army deserters, Vlassov Russians, common thieves and even Volksdeutsche. Officers are sent to them by General Anders. The gangs are being steadily liquidated, he continued, and turned to his records when asked for figures. These showed 142 raids by security forces on bandit gangs in October, with 13 gangs totally wiped out and 28 destroyed, 400 members killed and 600 captured.

Radkiewicz doubted if the remaining armed gangs number more than 1,000 men, but they seize automobiles and flee from district to district. It is notable that the centres of Fascist banditry are identical with places where anti-Jewish pogroms and riots have occurred. It is much easier to fight them now than formerly, the Minister declared, because the local populations no longer protect them. Workers' party members, trade unionists and Jews are their principal victims.

As the armed gangs are suppressed, their sympathizers shift to political work inside the legal parties. That poses a problem not only in the suppression of revolution but in the maintenance of political rights.

Poland's Plans and Achievements

Two months spent in Poland leave me with a deep admiration for the Polish people and a thorough respect for the courageous way their Government is attacking its complex and difficult task.

This feeling has increased as one contact after another has revealed the inescapable handicaps imposed by the devastation of war.

It reaches a climax when one thinks of the cruel and utterly needless additional handicaps imposed by the sabotage by the London Polish emigres and their followers inside and outside the country.

Transport is, and will continue to be, the critical factor limiting Poland's recovery.

Industrial production is increasing in gigantic leaps.

Silesia, as busy as the Lehigh Valley in Pennsylvania, furnishes a foretaste of the rising standard of living which Poland will attain.

Coal production, two days before I left Warsaw, had attained its pre-war level of 127,000 tons daily. But the coal mines were threatened with a slowdown because of inability to move coal.

Near Katowice I stood beside a coal pile containing 30,000 tons. Peasant carts furnished the only visible means of transport.

The mine, running at two-thirds capacity, faced a shutdown.

But in Chenstochowa, only 50 miles away, a factory employing 140 men was idle for lack of coal. The people in

Warsaw pay 10 times the mine price and cannot get it. Colliers sent to fill export orders wait in the seaport.

All this is due to the smashing of Polish railroad cars in the war, the looting of rolling stock by the Germans, and to the extraordinary demands upon what is left for the withdrawal of the Russian army and for Polish and Russian repatriation.

There are some bright spots in the transport picture. Sweden, desperately needing coal, is sending 1,300 railroad cars to be used between Danzig and Silesia.

The Silesian food shortage is being handled by a huge exchange of coal for food in peasant wagons and trucks, but this does not touch the industrial shortage or warm the freezing cities.

Polish locomotive works are increasing production so fast that this part of the deficit is being overcome. The imperative need is for freight cars.

The Minister of Industry, Hilary Minc, surveying a month's developments since our last talk, said the magnitude of the industrial recovery was adding to the transport bottle-neck.

More factories producing more goods need more cars to move raw materials and finished goods as well as fuel.

This coincided with a seasonal growth of transport demands. Potatoes and beetroots had to be moved before severe weather set in. Coal reserves must be built up. Repatriates had to be moved before winter.

The transport difficulties, Minc said, now place an absolute bar to further industrial expansion.

"The Government," he said, "is determined to break these difficulties now. It has created a special commission for transport matters. It has been at work for only a few days, but even that reveals the possibilities of surmounting the crisis and thus improving our Polish economy."

Poland's long-range industrial outlook is excellent. The mines, foundries and factories are operating in a way that testifies to efficient methods and personnel, despite a serious

POLAND'S PLANS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

shortage of skilled artisans, engineers and administrators.

'The other great unsolved problem in Poland is the development of the new western territories.

Vice-Premier Wladyslaw Gomulka sketched this problem for me, giving no hint of the not-announced fact that he yet to be in charge of it.

"A special ministry for the western territories is being organized," Gomulka said, "but the minister has not yet been named. Up till now there has been only a disorganized rush toward these territories. In order to make them a real part of Poland, there will be new organization and uniform administration.

"Generally speaking, we wish to mobilize as much financial help as possible for the people coming back to Poland. This is to help reconstruct industry and especially harbours.

"A second aim is to mobilize technical equipment to make it possible to cultivate lands left idle in 1945. For this we count most upon United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration tractors.

"Next is the question of removing Germans. We are preparing plans for this repatriation and are going to fulfill it in agreement with Russian occupation authorities in Germany, and with an international Allied committee.

"Last will be the aim of colonizing the territory. In this we take account of the fact that it contains partly Germanized Polish people, especially around Opole, whom we do not wish to lose. Most important of all is the critical food question in the western territories, where little land was cultivated in 1945 because of military operations and lack of population. But we attach such importance to these western territories that we place their requirements first in the list of what we need for our country."

In his remark about Germanized Poles Gomulka apparently was referring to complaints of Polish repatriates from east of the Bug River that the Polish peasants in Lower Silesia are more German than Polish.

The Silesians, in turn, regard the repatriated eastern Poles as lazy. That is because, coming from the rich black earth belt east of Lwow, they hesitate to work earnestly on thin land which requires potash and lime.

This temperamental conflict imposes a real problem in the territories acquired from Germany.

Men in the Government who are tackling these problems are doing so under some of the greatest difficulties ever faced by any government. They are especially handicapped by a lack of competent administrative staffs.

The blunders and inadequacies of the Polish Government are due to the systematic slaughter of educated Poles by Nazi Germany. This makes the hard work and the devotion of the top men all the more striking.

Although Poland is proceeding in the direction of Socialism, there is no real social revolution as yet, and almost nothing that could be called Bolshevism. Communists have told me they do not expect to see a fully socialized State within 30 years, because the people are not ready for it.

Nevertheless, the most dynamic force I have witnessed in Poland was an assembly of 1,600 trade union leaders at the Polish National Congress of Labour, in November.

There were strength, intelligence and terrific power in that gathering—something that reduces the anti-Government intelligentsia of the Polonia Hotel to a cipher.

With such a force in the cities and a corresponding land hunger among the peasants, I do not believe Poland will ever go back to the control of landed aristocracy and privately-owned big business supported by professional army officers.

Music and Society

England and the European Tradition

By WILFRID MELLERS

At this time, when the desire to hear and understand good music is growing in England, it is important for us to know the background of English music. This book is not a history of music, nor is it a technical treatise intended for specialists. It describes the growth of English musical tradition, and relates this growth to the social concepts that went to produce it. This fundamental analysis should be of real interest not only to musicians but to everybody who is concerned with European culture.

‘What do we expect music to give us?’ asks the author. He suggests that music is something which should happen whenever people feel a need to speak through sound. It is not only the quantity of music produced which is important. The reason for its production, and its relation to the lives of the people has an equal importance.

In this book, Mr. Mellers has considered the musical idioms of different periods and shown how music has had different meanings to people living at various times in England’s past. He argues that our modern composers might well need a completely new technique to overcome the bias against serious contemporary music, especially if music is to become the popular force it has been in the past. He traces the course of English musical tradition down to the confused delta of the present where there are three separate streams: the Britten and Tippett enthusiasts, the Prom audiences and the Sinatra and Dinah Shore fans. This book is one of those which will help to bridge the gulfs between these audiences, and renew the musical tradition of England.

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By G. DE SAINT-FOIX

M. SAINT-FOIX, the author of this book, has spent some twenty-five years studying and writing about the work of Mozart, and to this critical analysis of the symphonies he has been able to give an understanding which comes from a knowledge of the minutiae of the master's life. As he says himself in the introduction, 'whoever has been able to follow Mozart's orchestral thought, in all its manifestations, will on this account have discerned something of the grand lines of his creative thought.'

Actually, to examine Mozart's symphonic work is to follow him throughout his crowded career, for between the age of eight and thirty-two, Saint-Foix reveals at least a dozen periods of 'symphonic' activity. He takes each symphony, and with the aid of numerous musical examples, describes the changing and diverse colours reflected by Mozart's orchestral development. Each symphony is placed historically in relation to the work of his contemporaries, particularly Joseph Haydn, who influenced Mozart's work in many ways.

Finally, Saint-Foix attempts to break down the widely-held illusion that Mozart's symphonies are charming, but superficial. By describing the universality of Mozart's genius and his subtle expression of the cross-currents in the human soul, he makes the reader aware of the depth of meaning in the master's work, and thus succeeds in his task.

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This is merely one example of their cruelty. They lived in a palace which was surrounded by a moat and high, red walls past which they did not dare to venture for fear of assassination. Naturally they knew nothing of the outside world, and their cruelty was matched by their ingenuousness. They really thought that their ragged, badly-armed little army could defeat the British, and unable to realise the consequences, tweaked hard at the lion's tail and defied it to do its worst.

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